

ANECDOTES OF ACTORS.

THE effect of pauses in the delivery of emphatic passages on the stage is well known; though it has sometimes been carried to an extravagant extent. John Kemble's practice in this respect was so extreme that Sheridan recommended him to perform Hamlet with music during the pauses. Mossop, an earlier actor, had much of the same sort of mechanical dignity. It was said that in the speech of Zanga, in the *Revenge*, to Alonzo,

"Know, then, 'twas I that ——"

one might have left the theatre at the first word of the speech, called a coach, and returned to the box in time to discover that Zanga . . . "did it."

Garriek had a brother named George, who was affectionately attached to him, and held him in great awe. Garriek, when acting, was extremely nervous about any noise made behind the scenes, as it destroyed his effects; accordingly, George was accustomed to parade up and down on the stage, and if any persons were talking, to exclaim—"Hush! Hush!" This was his constant habit. The salary of George was considerable in the theatre, and it was more than once inquired, why, or for what George Garriek was paid that amount? George Bannister solved the question in a moment; "It is *hush-money*!" said he. When the new theatre was built in 1794, a plank of the old stage, on which Garriek had trod, was preserved from the wreck, at the request of Sheridan, and carefully placed in the floor of the new building. This structure was destroyed by fire in 1807.

Reynolds, the prolific dramatist, produced a musical after-piece at Drury Lane, called "The Caravan; or, the Driver and his Dog." The music was good, and it had a profitable run. The chief attraction of the piece was a dog called Carlo. One day, Sheridan, being then manager, went to see the performance of this wonderful dog. As he entered the green-room, Dignum (who played in the piece) said to him, with a woful countenance, "Sir, there is no guarding against illness; it is truly lamentable to stop the run of a successful piece like this; but really —" "Really what?" cried Sheridan, interrupting him. "I am so unwell," continued Dignum, "that I cannot go on longer than to-night." "You!" exclaimed Sheridan, "my good fellow, you terrified me; I thought you were going to say that the dog was taken ill."

A drama was presented to Sheridan, in which the characters amounted to no less than fifty-six. "What's this?" said Sheridan; "the new army list?" "Nothing of the kind, sir," said the introducer; "it is on an Irish story, and by an Irishman." Sheridan glanced over a few leaves, and saw that it was altogether inadmissible. "Tell my countryman," said he, "that as a drama, there can be no hope of its success, partly owing to the reduced population of London; but it might turn into a history of the Rebellion, and the list at the beginning would do for a muster at the levy *en masse*." Sheridan said the labor inflicted on the manager, in the revision of plays, was inconceivable. Play-writing, singly, accounted for the employment of that immense multitude, who drain away obscure years beside the inkstand, and haunt the streets with iron-moulded visages and study-colored clothes. It singly accounted for the rise of paper, which had exhausted the rags of England and Scotland, and had almost stripped off the last covering of Ireland. He had counted plays till calculation had sunk beneath the number; and every rejected play of them all seemed, like the clothes of a Spanish beggar, to turn into a living, restless, merciless, indefatigable progeny.

Boaden, the biographer of Kemble and Siddons, once wrote a play called the *Italian Monk*. There was a ghost in it. Boaden is reported to have said that, in this play, he had given Billy (meaning William Shakspeare) the go-by. He was ever after called Billy-the-go-by Boaden.

Notoriety is very important to all literary men, but of vital consequence to actors. We have met with an anecdote of Colley Cibber, which illustrates his sagacity in this respect. His son, Theophilus, complained to him that the public journals took every possible opportunity of abusing him. "Indeed," said the veteran of public favor, "and you complain of it? Take my advice, Theodore, when the critics cease to abuse you, write paragraphs to abuse yourself, and pay the editors and reporters to insert them. Q. R.